

I AM Navy Medicine

 RSS : Posts Comments

NAVY MEDICINE LIVE

THE OFFICIAL BLOG OF U.S. NAVY AND MARINE CORPS HEALTH CARE • 2011 & 2012 WINNER OF BEST NAVY BLOG

HomeAboutDisclaimerNavy Medicine NewsNavy Medicine WebSiteI AM Navy Medicine

Written on MAY 20, 2015 AT 6:00 AM by SVANDERWERFF

The Wrestler

Filed under NAVY MEDICINE HISTORY, U.S. NAVY, UNCATEGORIZED

{3 COMMENTS}



Before donning the uniform, McDaniel was an All-American collegiate wrestler at Oklahoma State University.

By BUMED Historian’s Office

Editor’s Note: There are many colorful characters in the Navy whose stories live on long after they retire from the service. There can be little doubt that in the pantheon of these “larger than life” figures retired Rear Adm. William McDaniel, MC stands tall. McDaniel served 30 years in the Navy Medical Department where he commanded five medical facilities including Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Virginia (1992-1995) before retiring in 1997. Despite his many accomplishments, there are those today who will remember him today as the “Wrestling CO.”

Before donning the uniform, McDaniel was an All-American collegiate wrestler at Oklahoma State University. He would later become a five-time wrestling champion in the Navy, and serve as a physician for the USA wrestling team. To say that his reputation as a wrestler preceded him at his commands would be correct and throughout his career he would occasionally engage in competitive matches with members of his hospital staff. In a recent oral history session with the BUMED history office, McDaniel remembered one notable match.

Navy Medicine Video

Navy Medicine is a global healthcare network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries. Navy Medicine personnel deploy with Sailors and Marines worldwide, providing critical mission support aboard ship, in the air, under the sea and on the battlefield.

Navy Medicine Social Media

twitter

Follow us on Twitter

facebook

Join us on Facebook

issuu

Read our publications

flickr

View our photo stream

YouTube

Watch our videos

Navy Medicine Live Archives

- June 2015 (1)
- May 2015 (20)
- April 2015 (20)
- March 2015 (21)



McDaniel served 30 years in the Navy Medical Department where he commanded five medical facilities including Naval Medical Center Portsmouth.

I wrestled all my life, and when I got to Portsmouth I made sure we had wrestling mats in the gym because I still enjoyed the sport. Every once in a while I would get kids that would come up to me in the gym and say, “Hey Admiral, you want to go around?” And I’d wrestle them. About six months before I was due to leave I noticed on my calendar that there was a 12:30 wrestling match. I asked, “What in the world is this?”

My secretary said, “Some guy called over and said to make sure you’re there at 12:30.” I show up at the gym and there are about 300 spectators in the bleachers and two reporters from the *Virginia Pilot*. I thought, what in the world is going on? I grab this guy I’m going to wrestle, who’s a pretty good sized kid; he’s a corpsman, and I said, “What’s going on?”

He said, “Sir, I don’t need the ‘96-hour liberty.’ I just want the honor of knowing I beat you.”

I thought, “What the heck is he talking about?” Then I found out my command master chief had been telling everybody during the newcomer’s orientation every two weeks, “I’ll give 96 hours liberty to anybody who can beat the skipper on the wrestling mat.” But he never told me that.

This kid was a pretty good wrestler. He’d wrestled at ODU and he’d done a seven-match tour of Russia undefeated.(1) When we tied up, I could see I was considerably stronger than he was, and ultimately broke his rib while pinning him. I’m sure to his chagrin that on the front page of the sports pages in the *Virginia Pilot* the next day was a full article, “What a deal, beat the Admiral, get 96 hours off.” The article showed him on his back unsuccessfully trying to do a bridge. (2)

The next day “Sick Call” called me and said, “Admiral, you know that guy you wrestled yesterday? He’s in here, and you know what his complaint is? His complaint is: ‘I think the Admiral broke something inside me.’” Yes, he had a broken rib.

About two months later I wrestled a kid who invited a gym full of people. I beat him, but he was good. At that point I told my secretary, “I’m retiring from wrestling.” I looked like I’d been in a street fight every time I wrestled.

For more on [Navy Medical Oral Histories](#) and the [BUMED Oral History Project](#) please click on link below.

<http://www.med.navy.mil/bumed/nmhstory/Pages/Oral-History.aspx>

Endnotes:

(1) Old Dominion University

February 2015 (16)
January 2015 (12)
December 2014 (17)
November 2014 (11)
October 2014 (15)
September 2014 (20)
August 2014 (14)
July 2014 (13)
June 2014 (8)
May 2014 (11)
April 2014 (9)
March 2014 (14)
February 2014 (7)
January 2014 (7)
December 2013 (7)
November 2013 (12)
October 2013 (7)
September 2013 (14)
August 2013 (13)
July 2013 (11)
June 2013 (22)
May 2013 (15)
April 2013 (14)
March 2013 (14)
February 2013 (14)
January 2013 (12)
December 2012 (11)
November 2012 (11)
October 2012 (7)
September 2012 (9)
August 2012 (12)
July 2012 (13)
June 2012 (17)
May 2012 (22)
April 2012 (14)
March 2012 (13)
February 2012 (14)
January 2012 (13)
December 2011 (13)

(2) Bridge: grappling move in wresting performed lying down.

← Next post

Previous post →

svanderwerff tagged this post with: [hospital](#), [medical](#), [MEDNEWS](#), [military](#), [Navy Medicine History](#)

Read 183 articles by [svanderwerff](#)

November 2011 (20)
October 2011 (22)
September 2011 (12)
August 2011 (16)
July 2011 (10)

Merritt Allen
LOL. I was the brilliant PAO who invited the press!

Sean Convoy
Grateful for my time on the mat with him at NMCP!

Barbara Swanson
I found this amazing site to make a living online...I'm now close to making \$3000 a month.

